The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian

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The Missionary Spirit.

In a recent article which appeared in the columns of the "Northern Whig" the writer dealt very sympathetically with the history of Unitarianism in the North of Ireland and spoke in the most laudatory terms of the fine type of men and women it had produced. We are grateful for such a recognition of our place in the religious world. Yet perhaps we can get most good out of the writer's eulogium if we think not so much of his tribute as of his qualified praise in one particular respect. His point was that while in times of persecution we were courageous and energetic, in other days we made no attempt to add to our numbers or to increase our ecclesiastical position. The consequences were that we were a diminishing body, both here and elsewhere. Or, to put his point more tersely, we lack the true Missionary spirit.

It is unfortunate if that be the case, since we really stand condemned for spiritual selfishness. If our faith can be all we claim for it—reasonable and reverent, enlightened and progressive—it is surely something of which many others have need as well as ourselves. To remain satisfied with ourselves and our possession, and yet to see the world crying out for all it represents, is indeed to be spiritually futile. Rather should we take a lesson out of the book of those whose faith we condemn and yet whose zeal in its behalf far exceeds our own. The very superiority we claim for a free faith is a call for its constant promulgation.

Cannot we seek to give practical effect to such a challenge of the times in the forthcoming days? In England men of our Free Faith have decided to make in the coming Autumn a forward movement, believing that the need is urgent and the conditions propitious. The above contention can be legitimately made here. When a narrow orthodoxy can start campaigns for Co-operative work in which many Churches unite is there nothing we can do? We need not copy their methods or even hope for their apparent success but there is much we might do to build up our Churches and carry our own message to the outsider.

Already this matter has been before our representatives bodies and received sympathetic consideration. There will be more heard of it too, this Autumn. In the meantime, however, we would appeal for the sympathy and support of all members of our united Church. Let us embrace the hopeful opportunity and make a real step forward in the immediate future. To do so will be good for ourselves no less than for those we desire to interest and all who believe in our cause.

Notes of the Month.

We deeply regret that owing to the pressure of other work at the printing office it was found impossible to publish this monthly issue of the magazine at the proper time. It is therefore a fortnight later than usual, but we trust that this fact will not be of great inconvenience to our readers. Naturally we strive to keep up the regularity of publication so that our friends may always count upon its timely appearance. The holidays do exercise a disturbing influence, but when they are over, and the normal is regained, we shall hope to get every month's issue in regular sequence.

* * *

Some months ago we made a strong financial appeal to the different congregations of our Church. In one case there was a gratifying and challenging response. The Comber congregation undertook to pay a certain sum at once and a regular contribution every year provided that ten other congregations could co-operate in a similar effort. Had that challenge been taken up our financial liabilities would have been over and the magazine placed on a satisfactory footing. But, unfortunately, so far only one other congregation has made any response, Banbridge having sent the sum of £3 2s. to the Business Agent. For that we are very grateful, but unless other congregations help in accordance with their ability it will be impossible to discharge our liabilities. All who desire the Magazine to continue should therefore seriously consider to what extent they can help to ensure that end. The Rev. G. J. Slipper will be glad to receive contributions and promises.

* * *

We are profoundly thankful that even at the eleventh hour it was found possible to avert the threatened coal strike. While such an eventuality would have been disastrous for commerce and industry it would also have had serious reaction upon morals. In such a conflict savage passions are unloosed and the possibilities of harmonious co-operation between employers and employed made nugatory. The brutal assault upon Bishop Welldon by Durham miners is indicative of what might have happened on a much wider scale. We sincerely trust that in the period of truce steps may be devised for meeting the economic difficulties which do exist. The state of our national industries is at present so serious that anything which tells against the most cordial co-operation between class and class should be rigorously excluded.

* * *

The tragic ending to the Tennessee Trial represented by the death of Mr. W. J. Bryan is one we sincerely regret. Mistaken as we believe him to have been in the championship of obscurantism in the supposed interests of Christian faith, we would do him the justice of believing that he was sincere in his views and certainly manifested unusual ability in their advocacy. In the face of a death so unexpected, we would refrain from further criticism, especially as we strongly hold that the cause of truth is ultimately bound to prevail even in places like Tennessee.

* * *

A former visitor to Belfast, Dr. E. M. Wilbur, of California, has recently contributed very interesting articles to "The Christian Register" descriptive of his travels in Europe during his Sabbatical year. Places associated with the great names of Michael Servetus and Faustus Soccini were the objects of his Unitarian zeal and he spoke of his experiences with vivid and obvious delight. As we had the opportunity of hearing him lecture on his travels we can tell of his very faithful journeyings and also of his fully-informed capacity as a lecturer thereon. His book, shortly to appear, on "Our Unitarian Heritage," should reflect the interest and information which find harmony in such a skilful guide.

Temperance Notes.

Before the Synod.

The following resolution was passed unanimously by the Synod on Wednesday, 17th June :—

"That we, the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland in General Synod assembled, desire to express our appreciation of the firm stand made by our Northern Government against the persistent demands to amend the Intoxicating Liquor Act.

"Local Option is, in our opinion, a just and democratic measure that should be passed by the Government at the earliest opportunity."

An interesting discussion arose when the Temperance Committee report was presented. This Committee had complained of want of support from the various churches, feeling disheartened by the indifference and apathy of the churches. The Committee was not complaining of the churches' want of interest in Temperance, for of this they had no evidence one way or the other, but of lack of interest in the work of the Committee. Here is an illustration of what was meant. Recently this Committee sent circular letters to all church secretaries and ministers asking what Temperance work was being done in the particular congregation addressed, informing them that special preachers were available for lectures or sermons, suggesting that a collection be made for the Committee's work (or a small subscription sent), and also asking for suggestions in its work. Only two replies were received !

An attempt was made to transfer the Temperance work to the already overburdened Sunday School Committee. This received no support. At the same time we believe many are of the opinion that Temperance Education is more for the children than for adults. We would like to congratulate the Rev. A. L. Agnew, B.A., on accepting appointment on this Committee and are anticipating a new lease of energy and enthusiasm from his youthful zeal and courage.

Have you a Band of Hope ? Many Bands of Hope and Juvenile Temperance Societies close down during the summer months. Still it is not inopportune to ask once again that we may compile a census of the Bands or Societies in our churches. Will you please let us know ? Write to the convener at Banbridge. Banbridge possesses a Band of Hope of about sixty members. We believe there is one at Rademon and another at Holywood. Others perhaps, though having no definite Temperance Society, yet inculcate its principles among other virtues in other ways. One or more of our churches have Boy Scouts, Girl Guides or Literary Societies where the claims of Temperance are not forgotten. Please let us know.

Do you Agree ?—It was thought by some that there is not so much need for Temperance work in our churches as there is very much less drunkenness among our people. Whether this is so or not we believe it is undoubtedly true that there is less intemperance generally among the community at large (whether from our Congregations or not) than in past years. People are becoming more temperate. It certainly is ' not the thing ' to be found drunk in public to-day, even at social functions. But our parents can recall incidents of persons held in public esteem who apparently thought it not degrading to be seen walking home inebriated. This argument was used before Synod.

It is certainly a healthy sign. But we must not lose sight of the fact that our National Drink Bill is enormous, and this during a period of great financial distress and great unemploy ment. Let us watch America sympathetically. Let us not be too hasty in judging what is happening over there, but trust and pray that her bold venture, her courageous act, may show us the better way. P.G.

Prayer of Honour.

Sermon broadcasted by the Rev. Herbert J. Rossington, M.A., B.D., of the First Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, Belfast, on Sunday August 2nd, 1925.

TEXT: **"Freely ye received, freely give."** St. Matthew's Gospel, x. 8.

A great British Statesman, Charles James Fox, acquired fame not merely for his political ability, but also for that social irregularity which characterised so many men of his day and generation. Amongst the tradespeople he was known as one ever ready to receive, but very reluctant to give. One day a tradesman, to whom he was greatly indebted, called upon him for the settlement of an account long over due. He was informed that the statesman was unable to meet his claim. "But," objected the disappointed creditor, "I happen to know that you recently paid a much larger debt than mine." "That is quite true," said Fox, "but it was a debt of honour." Without a moment's hesitation the tradesman stepped forward and thrust his account into the blazing fire, and as it was quickly consumed before their eyes, he quietly remarked to the statesman: "Well, my account is now a debt of honour." It is said that Fox was so impressed by this appeal to his generous instincts that he speedily paid over to the tradesman the money previously asked for in vain.

It matters not if that story be not literally true—it is certainly in harmony with the facts of human experience. Rarely is such an appeal made to honourable, self-respecting persons, without evoking an adequate response. That which no form of compulsion could exact from them, is procurable when it is placed in the category of debts of honour. Transfer the case at issue from any ordinary Court of Equity to the Court of Honour, and prove its pertinence there, the right decision is not difficult to obtain. As in the instance recorded of Charles James Fox, so, likewise, when it touches ordinary individuals, the return is promptly made at the bidding of a scrupulous conscience or at the suggestion of a self-regarding pride. To be a delinquent when honour demands, is to place ourselves outside the pale of proper humanity.

Now it is precisely on this plane of activity that the precept of Jesus has its place. He does not so much issue a command as make an appeal:—"Freely ye received, freely give." He calls upon his disciples to discharge obligations which no Decalogue specifically enjoins and no Court of Law can enforce. He is thinking more of a regulating principle of all their actions than of any particular social service. To make of them open-handed generous givers of themselves was his primary concern. Even as He gave Himself to the uttermost, so, too, must they act, not with careful calculation or measured restraint, but with prompt and lavish abundance. To give freely, as He understood it, was to cast prudential consideration, on one side altogether. We owe it to the care of St. Paul that one most illuminating saying of Jesus has been preserved, which makes perfectly plain the manner in which he regards right giving. Speaking to the elders at Miletus the great apostle bids them remember "the word of the Lord Jesus how He Himself said, it is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts xx. 30). And yet while the disciples are to give freely, their giving creates as it were competitive giving in the case of those they benefit. Generosity vies with generosity, open-heartedness calls forth corresponding open-heartedness. So contagious becomes the atmosphere, that reciprocal giving and receiving is now the rule of life. "Give and it shall be given unto you;

good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom." (St. Luke vi. 38). Such, says Jesus, is the effect of free and full giving. It reproduces itself, making sure its own rightful succession. And the effect of His suggestion as stated in our text, is to secure by our prompt and honourable action some meet return for things received. Self-respect seeks to express itself in the glad and ungrudging tender of the best that we have and they best that we are.

Viewed, then, as a principle of life, we perceive the wide scope of its operations. It touches every relationship of life in which human beings are brought together, but it is most precious and pertinent outside the domain of ordinary legal requirements. The obligations here in question are at once the most sacred, and, at the same time, the most subject to the dictates of personal predilection. Nowhere is there more adequate opportunity for the observance of Christ's precept than in the relations of home life. The actual law takes cognisance only of certain things affecting the inter-related lives of parents and children. Precisely where it ceases to act, the law of love begins to operate. No true parent measures his duties to his child by the requirements of statutory law, while it is the very essence of true material affection to give lavishly without a thought of return. When the spirit of niggardly calculation determines the conduct of either parent or child, the best and highest possibilities of human life remain unrealised. At its best parental affection means the unstinted and ungrudging devotion of heart and head and hand to the object of its solicitude and care, and the only fitting response on behalf of the child thus cherished is an unmeasured and unconstrained outpouring of affection. Above the portals of every true home might be fitly inscribed the honourable and honoured appeal: "Freely ye received, freely give."

Yet not alone in the home have we richly received. The life of the community into which we have entered is what it is by reason of many rich and precious gifts from the past. The wide and enriched common inheritance these have made possible, is as truly ours as the legacies bequeathed by our parents. If we remain unconscious of our indebtedness, or unconcerned about any fitting service in return, no law can compel a reluctant conformity. Here, again, it is a question of appeal to honour and self-respect. That is surely the significance of the motto which the City of Belfast puts before its Citizens—*Pro Tanto quid Retribuamus.* It is the application to civic concerns of the principle which our text commends as a general rule of life. The city is powerless to enforce it in the manner in which it can enforce its bye-laws. Whether we feel the effect, or not, is not determined by any fear of penalty, but by the recognition of an honourable obligation. It remains profoundly true that we have all received much before we can individually say, "I am a citizen of no mean city." To use the language of civic pride, without being prompted to the free and full discharge of civic obligations, is impossible to members of any properly constituted Court of Honour.

The same is equally true in the wider sphere of our common homeland. Patriotism would lose all its truest meaning if it did not evoke something more than mere sentiment and suggested no service to the community. All that makes our country dear to us is made up of the unconsidered and unconstrained giving of past generations of unselfish men and women. The liberty we enjoy, the faith we freely embrace, the great and glorious examples of heroism which are at once our pride and our inspiration, these come to us as a call and a challenge to prove ourselves worthy of such priceless privileges as these have conferred upon us. Not alone in times of national stress, when even the careless

and the indifferent become conscious of the issues at stake, but in ordinary times and circumstances, there is an honourable obligation of which our text gives clear reminder : " Freely ye received, freely give."

It is surely unnecessary to emphasise at any length the more obviously religious bearing of Christ's words upon his latter-day disciples. The God, to whom he so freely dedicated his life, and at his behest surrendered it in sublime and self-forgetting sacrifice, is in the language of common devotion regarded as " The giver of every good and perfect gift." If such language be not of the lips only, but really issues from the heart, it implies the greatest and the most sacred of obligations. There can be no question of a return at once adequate and final. It is not so much what we have, but what we are, that is here determinative. If, as St. Paul reminded his hearers, " The Lord loveth a cheerful giver," it is the love of like for like. To give freely is not so much our duty, as the expression of our hearts' best and deepest devotion. But not in mere verbal form, however lofty, are we asked as honourable persons to tender our dues of devotion. Rather are we to give them concrete expression in the coinage of everyday human affection and sympathy and regard. If we would stand acquitted in God's Court of Honour, we shall seek at all times " to owe no man anything, but to love one another," knowing full well that if we love not man whom we have seen we cannot love God whom we have not seen." And then, too, we satisfy the condition laid down by Christ : " Inasmuch as ye have done it to the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Amen.

This country has the best materials for an army in a righteous cause, and the worst in a wicked one.

The Angels.

Among Protestants never very much is said about the ministry of angels, though in the Episcopalian Churches of Ireland and England, especially in the High Church section, angels are more frequently referred to, and the ritual of the Roman Church is built up to a great extent on the ministry of the Angels. For instance, it is an important part of that doctrine, that at the Sacrament the Angel of the Presence descends and takes his place in front of the altar, and gives his aid in the distribution of the spiritual forces. The candles on the altar, with the lamp of perpetual adoration, represent seven orders of angels, every-one of those orders being like a great ray of the glory of God. These make up the Sabaoth, as the Jewish word is, the mighty hosts of various grades that worship before the throne of God.

The Jewish religion has a great deal in it about the angels, and the various departments of their work. And, just as Christians conclude their prayers, with the words : " Through Christ our Lord " or " In the name and Spirit of Christ " so the Jews frequently close their prayers with the words : " Through Raphael." Their names all end with the syllable el which we have in Beth-el—house of God. El or Elohism means God. Michael is called " Your Prince." He is mentioned in the Book of Daniel and his name means " The Strength of God " or " He who is like God in strength." Gabriel means " The omniscience of God " and he is sometimes called " God's Hero." Raphael signifies " The healing power of God." Uriel is " The Light or Fire of God." Ladkiel is " The Benevolence of God." The other two are named Chamuel and Jophiel. Perhaps some reader could supply the meanings of the last two. The Psalmist means these seven great Archangels when he refers to " the angels that excel in strength that do his commandments hearkening unto the voice of His word."

In the Early Church there was teaching about nine orders of angels the aforenamed Archangels being each at the head of an order. Seven are connected more directly with this world and two are of a wider system. Make a right-angled triangle and draw a square on each side and you find nine points to remember them by viz. :— Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers, Cherubim and Seraphium, Angels and Archangels.

From every grade of intelligence such as that, equal to pure-minded innocent children right up to a grandeur beyond our comprehension, it was taught this mighty company of heaven ranged.

Evidently they are not quite identical with the spirits of those who had died, but are on an independent parallel line with us. Man was not "only a little lower," but with some grades of them quite their equal.

Science gives us a long table of vibrations showing just what wavelengths we can respond to, and that there are many such that we must be ignorant of. If there are beings with bodies of matter of that type, possibly we might never see them.

There is no limit to God's majesty and wisdom. The early Christians strongly believed in the ministry of Angels, and as they believed that God had a plan, and worked according to it, as we should expect the Great Architect of the Universe to do, the Seven Great Archangels were called Builders or Co-operators with God. Recorded in the Bible are visions of these shining ones, glorious beings shining like flames of fire, others with colours of the rainbow around them, an appearance round them which made them look like great precious stones in the sunlight. These are all attempts to convey something of their glory. In prayers for the healing of the sick, the Angel Raphael is nvoked.

We are living in a universe full of life, full of beauty, of joy and of hope. If man thought more of the life side of God's great plan, they would live in the world with more reverence. ULLIN.

"History of Non-Subcribing Presbyterianism in Ireland."

By Dr. Henry Montgomery.

PRESBYTERIAN BACKSLIDING.

I lament to say, however, that all Presbyterians have not entitled themselves to this meed of praise for honourable consistency and patriotism. Some miserable recreants I have known, especially amongst the higher classes—men who spent their youth in organising rebellion, disgraced their mature years by timidity and truckling, and dishonoured their old age by endeavouring to tread down every principle which they honestly supported, in their earlier and better years! Most of them are gone ; and I grant to their memory the charity of leaving them unnamed.

I cannot, however, conceal a deeper cause of grief, in relation to my Presbyterian brethren of the humbler classes. The renovated Calvinism of the Synod of Ulster has, for the last twenty years, been gradually undermining their political integrity and their sense of public justice. Yes : they have come, with a few honourable exceptions, to connect a man's fitness for the enjoyment of civil rights, with the orthodoxy of his religious creed. Yes : the degenerate descendants of the illustrious Volunteers of 1783, of the United Irishmen of 1798, now swell the Orange Societies and Processions of Ulster ; and are, at every election, the most confidential supporters of religious and political intolerance. Whilst all the world around them is in blessed progress, and rapidly advancing into the regions of light—whilst the very Pope of Rome, the illustrious Pius IX. has become the greatest reformer of the age—miserable, priest-led Calvinistic Presbyterians, are grouping their way back into dungeons, and trying to pick up rusty fetters, with which to enchain their children, their country, and themselves !

The prominent position occupied by the ministers and laity of the Presbyterian Church, in organising and carrying forward the rebellion of 1798, naturally attracted the early attention of Government. Serious thoughts were entertained of taking away their Royal Bounty, both as a penalty and a humiliation. That fund, by various small grants in the reign of Charles II., William III., Queen Anne, George I., and George III., produced an annual income of £32, to each minister ; and this stipend, it was proposed to withdraw. Dr. Black, of Derry, however, who was well acquainted with human nature, suggested a far more effectual plan for securing the loyalty of his church. In this plan, it has been said he enjoyed the concurrence of the sagacious Dr. Bruce ; and the matter was submitted to Government by the first Lord Castlereagh. Instead of punishing them by the infliction of poverty, which would only have created wide-spread discontent, it was resolved to bind them to the state "by golden chains," much stronger than those which had been previously applied. Government accordingly proposed to divide the congregations of the General Synod of Ulster and Presbytery of Antrim, into three classes, equal in number, and to regulate those classes by the stipend and population of each congregation. Ministers in the *First Class* were to receive £100 per annum ; those in the *Second Class*, £75 ; and those in the *Third Class*, £50. Had the arrangement proposed to give the largest Bounty to the poorest Congregations, the offer would have been one of decided benevolence ; but, the scheme being purely one of policy, an opposite course was pursued, and the large and wealthy Congregations, whom it was most important to influence, received the largest share of the Royal Gift. This created great discontent, as tending to destroy the *equality* of Presbyterian Ministers, whilst it rendered little service to the poorer Congregations. It was, therefore, ardently debated in the General Synod ; and, to their credit I record it, the late Dr. Little, of Killileagh, John Bankhead, of Ballycarry, James Bankhead, of Dromore, Robert Shaw, of Banbridge, and several other Ministers who were, themselves, sure of being placed in the Firts Class, honourably advocated the equitable principle of placing all upon an equal footing, at £75 a year. A motion to this effect was carried in the Synod, and a Deputation waited upon the Lord Lieutenant to solicit his concurrence. When going into the audience-room, however, at Dublin Castle, they met Dr. Black, coming out with a triumphant smile upon his face ; and, after a civil reception, his Excellency said—"the conditions could not be changed ; but, if the Synod pleased, they could reject the grant altogether—to which his Majesty's Government would have no objection!" This settled the question ; and in the year 1803, the new arrangement came into operation. It is due to the Government, however, to state, that nothing could have been more liberal than their "conditions" in all other respects : for, they expressly stipulated that, in consequence of the additional grant, "no interference with either the doctrine or discipline of the Church, should be claimed ; and that the Bounty, when once granted to any Individual, should not be withdrawn, so long as it should be continued to the Body, at large."

Some very independent Presbyterians opposed, altogether, the reception of the Grant, "as calculated to render their Ministers the slaves of the State" ; and one congregation, I have heard, consisting of a *thousand families*, many of whom were very affluent, was greatly distinguished by its declamations against "pensions and slavery." Their worthy Pastor, himself, was not much in love with the new arrangement ; and, having no family, he made the following liberal proposition to his loud-tongued flock. "Advance my stipend," said he, "£50 a year, which will only be *one shilling*

for each family, and I shall most cheerfully give up £50 on my own part; in other words, although my Bounty is to be £100 a year, I will absolutely refuse to accept it." Well, what course did the superlatively pure and spirited Christians pursue, who so ardently desired their Minister to sacrifice £100 per annum, for the maintenance of conscience and independence? Why, they went quietly home; and proved that they did not hold all "the great principles," about which they had declaimed for many months, to be worthy of *one shilling a year!*

Listening-in

A Topical Causerie.

What is Coming? Many enjoyed this debate between Hilaire Belloc and George Bernard Shaw, 'over the wire' the other day. Concerning this, Mr. Hamilton Fyfe, Editor of the *Daily Herald*, wrote "What a bracing tonic it would have been for the nation if it had been told by two of its foremost authors:—

"What is coming depends on **you.**

"You can make anything you please of the future; either let it be the present intensified in suffering and confusion, or else make order where there is chaos, introduce sanity where there is madness, substitute for the brutal **each for himself, and the devil take the hindmost,** the nobler principle of **each for all and all for each.**

What do the Churches stand for?

Principal L. P. Jacks speaking at one of the Centenary meetings of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association on "The Call to Truth" (reported in the columns of *The Inquirer*), concluded his inspiring address in these words:—

"There had been an active discussion of late on 'What do the Churches stand for?' There was no subject upon which so many articles were offered to the Hibbert Journal as on that question. It had been answered in so many different ways, that we were really in a worse position than if it had never been answered at all.

"It seemed to him—he might be utterly mistaken—that the earliest date at which any Church could expect to find out what it stood for was the Day of Judgment. The people in the parable never found what they stood for until told to enter into the Kingdom prepared for them; they were too busy to bother about what they stood for.

"He doubted whether the Good Samaritan had the vaguest notion what he stood for, but he stood for the right thing. One of the best answers to the question, what the churches stand for, came from Canada—'The church is a union of those who love for the sake of those who suffer.'

"Civilization will have to go." In the Forum this story is told about Bishop Brent. Some short-sighted person had said to him—'Well this war proves one thing: Christianity's a failure; Civilization and Christianity cannot get on together.'

'If that's the case' replied the Bishop with quick lucidity, 'then Civilization will have to go.'"

MY CREED.

"To live as gently as I can,
To be, no matter where, a man;
To take what comes of good or ill;
To cling to faith and honour still;
To do my best and let that stand
The record of my brain and hand:
And then should failure come to me,
Still work and hope for victory!

To have no secret place, wherein
I stoop unseen to shame or sin;
To be the same when I'm alone
As when my every deed is known,
To live undaunted, unafraid
Of any step that I have made:
To be without pretence or shame,
Exactly what men think I am."

The Builder.

Group of Sunday School Conference Party, Rademon, 1925.

Sunday School Conference.

It is very gratifying to note the continued interest shewn by our congregations in the Sunday School Conference. A record gathering assembled at Rademon on Saturday, 6th June, over 500 being present. The weather left nothing to be desired nor did the welcome which was extended to us by the minister and congregation. The object of the conference is to stimulate interest in the work of the Sunday School, to give help and encouragement to those who have undertaken the task of teaching the children. Teaching, like every other duty, has its seasons of discouragement—times when the teachers will ask " Is it worth while ? " Our meeting at Rademon was an eloquent answer to the question and those who were present were certainly led to realise the supreme value of their work.

The Moderator (Rev. S. E. Bowen), presided. After the devotional service a paper was read by Rev. John Begg, on " The Inspirational Value of the Sunday School." The following is a summary of Mr. Begg's paper :—

This is an age when problems are more pronounced than the achievements of service, but the average Sunday School teacher is not so much concerned about the problems as to feel that the work he is doing is really worth while. To this work the teacher comes, week by week, primarily to teach, and to teach by the most helpful method. In this work there is no cramming and straining for ulterior aims, no list of subjects which must be got through whether we like it or not ; the field is the wide expanse of human nature, and the method the simple aim of creating a bias and a willingness to follow the good when it is known. One of the pronounced values of the Sunday School is that it makes teaching itself an inspiration.

Another source of inspiration is the realisation that the teacher belongs to a vast company who are definitely

seeking to teach the way of God to children ; also, in the fact that the awards of such teaching are not place and authority, but rather an awakened interest in the scholars and the hope of helping others along the difficult paths of moral and spiritual freedom. That calls forth from the teacher an effort to be and to give his best and leads to the cultivation of those qualities which make for character in the world thus leading to the developing of the teacher's own life ; He is forced into the field of psychology, to study the nature and the character of the child mind—such a study creates in him wider sympathies, and leads to greater ability to express his own thoughts more clearly.

Moreover there is an inspiration in the thought that *good character* is expected of the teacher, and in the realisation that he is responsible in some measure for those who are committed to his care—and in the opportunity which the weekly meeting affords the teacher should feel that he has the power to influence the scholars for good, since the things he is teaching are eternal and concern the destiny of the soul.

Further, the School has an inspirational value for the church. We sometimes speak as if the school and church were two separate institutions. They are not two but one—their interests are bound together because their objects are identical— the school is the home of youth ; here it is that the truths for which the church stands find opportunity for direct expression. In the teaching of the School there is hope for the church and inspiration for its cause. The church's own spiritual life is quickened and in the promise and potency of the school it may believe that the generations yet to be will live to perpetuate the truths for which it stands.

Finally, the school has an inspirational value for the scholars themselves—marked evidences of this were to be seen particularly during the war —a scheme for sending out personal letters of good cheer and fellowship to members of our own denomination was organised by Essex Hall and in the replies which were received one was deeply impressed by the emphasis with which men paid tribute to their Sunday School. Memories of their school and of their teachers had continued with them as an inspiration to a better and finer life and had helped them when faced with moral dangers. And among the vast numbers of scholars where no direct testimony is given the value of the school as an inspiration to goodness is just as certain and as great. And if the school had no greater function than to provide the man or woman with motive power sufficient to seek and to attain the good, or memories strong enough to light up the darker ways of trial, then that in itself would be a justifiable reason for its service.

Discussion was introduced by Mr. Frank Robinson, of Holywood, the following also taking part :—Rev. J. A. Kelly, Mrs. E. Thompson, Mr. Reynolds, Rev. P. Godding, Mrs. J. G. Davies. Prizes were presented by the Moderator to eight Scholars for essays submitted on lessons for 1924—the first prize being awarded to Miss Mildred Martin of All Souls' School.

A vote of thanks to Rademon congregation was, in the language of the seconder, "exhaustively" moved by Rev. J. A. Kelly, and seconded by Rev. A. Turner. We are now looking forward to a visit to Ballyclare next year.

—A.W.

The preserved literature of the first two hundred years of the Christian era does not give a paragraph in which the doctrine of endless punishment is announced. We first hear of it from Tertullian. He was originally a Pagan, born in Africa, a lawyer by profession, and of very violent temper when provoked.

Young People's Page

Some American Hymn Writers.

Last month we were thinking of some of the great men amongst the American Unitarians and it is very interesting to see how many of our favourite and most beautiful hymns are written by American Unitarians. Of course we have many favourites written by English Unitarians as well, for example, Sir John Bowring's, "In the Cross of Christ I glory," and "God is love, his mercy brightens"; Mrs. Adams's "Nearer my God to Thee" and "Part in Peace"; Mr. Blatchford's "Softly the Silent Night" and Dr. Martineau's "'Where is your God?' they say." But let us now look at some of the American Unitarian hymns and their writers.

Rev. J. W. Chadwick (1840-1904) was minister of the 2nd Unitarian Church in Brooklyn, New York; he wrote the hymn "Our Father's Faith we'll sing of Thee"; and also the beautiful one, "" It Singeth Low in Every Heart," also the New Year hymns, "Backward looking o'er the past," and "Another year of setting suns." Ralph W. Emerson (1803-1882) the famous essayist was the son of the minister of the First Unitarian Church, Boston, and was himself for a short period the minister of the 2nd Unitarian Church in Boston but afterwards he lived in Concord and devoted himself to writing and lecturing; he attended the Unitarian Church at Concord and was greatly beloved and revered by a large circle of friends. He wrote one hymn—"We love the venerable House our Fathers built to God." Rev. Nathaniel L. Frothringham (1793-1870) was also minister of the First Unitarian Church, Boston, where he was settled for 35 years. His hymns are to be found in many collections of various denominations. The one beginning: "Oh God, whose Presence glows in all, within, around us and above," was written for the ordination of a minister of the 2nd Unitarian Church, New York, 1828. His son,—Rev. O. B. Frothringham (1822-1895) wrote the hymn, "Thou Lord of Hosts, whose Guiding Hand." Rev. Wm. H. Furness (1802-1896) was for 50 years minister of the Unitarian Church at Philadelphia. He wrote many hymns including the beautiful evening one, "Slowly, by Thy Hand Unfurled." He also wrote "Father in Heaven, to whom my heart would lift itself in Prayer" and "What is this that stirs within; loving goodness, hating sin."

Oliver Wendell Holmes (1809-1894), was the son of the Unitarian minister at Cambridge, Mass. He first studied law and then medicine and was Professor of Anatomy. He was a regular worshipper at the Unitarian Church at Boston. His "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table" contains the hymn, "Lord of all being, Throned afar," and his "Professor at the Breakfast Table" contains the hymn, "Oh Lord divine that stoop'st to share our sharpest pang, our bitterest tear." He also wrote "Our Father while our hearts unlearn the creeds that wrong Thy Name." Rev. Fred. L. Hosmer (1840) another of the American Unitarians ministers has written a great many fine hymns, such as "I cannot think of them as dead"; "Immortal by their deed and vow"; "One thought I have, my ample creed"; "Oh, Thou in all Thy might so fair, in all Thy love so near." The Essex Hall Hymn Book Revised gives 20 of his hymns. Rev. Samuel Johnson (1822-1882) wrote three very well-known hymns—"Father, in Thy Mysterious Presence Kneeling"; "Life of Ages richly Poured" and "City of God, how broad and far outspread Thy walls sublime." Rev. Samuel Longfellow (1819-1902) brother of the poet, wrote a large number of our favourite hymns which will be found in all Unitarian hymn books and in many of other denominations—the Essex Hall Revised Book has twenty-six of his hymns—for example, "Holy Spirit, Truth

Divine" ! "One holy church of God appears" ; "Sing forth His high eternal name" ; "Again, as evening shadow falls" ; "Lord of the earth, the sky, the sea" and "Now on land and sea descending." James Russell Lowell (1819-1891) was the son of a Unitarian minister at Boston, Mass. He is famous as an essayist and poet and wrote the hymn in our collections, "Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide, in the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side."

Rev. Theodore Parker (1810-1860) —a great name in the history of American Unitarianism gave us the very well-known hymn, "Oh Thou great Friend to all the sons of men."

Rev. John Pierpoint (1785-1866) left orthodoxy and became a Unitarian minister in 1819. His hymn "Oh Thou to whom in ancient time, the lyre of Hebrew bards was strung" ; was written for the opening of the Unitarian Church at Salem in 1824. Rev. Minot J. Savage (1841-1918) was minister in Boston and New York and wrote many books, sermons and hymns ; the Essex Hall Revised Hymn Book gives three of his hymns, the best known, perhaps, being, "Oh Star of Truth downshining, through clouds of doubt and fear."

Rev. Edmund H. Sears (1810-1876) Unitarian Minister at Weston, Mass. wrote the Christmas hymn found in all collections—"It came upon the midnight clear." His neice, Miss Eliza Scudder, has also contributed to our hymn books, "Thou Peace divine encircling all" and "I cannot find Thee" and several others.

When we contrast these beautiful hymns with some of the doggerel verses to be found in some collections we should be proud to have such a rich heritage. Think of these hymns and then imagine singing :—

In some way or other,
The Lord will provide ;
It may not be my way,
It may not be thy way,
And yet in His own way,
The Lord will provide.

Dante as Traveller.

If we should ask ourselves where the greatest variety in life is to be found I think the general answer would be, "On a journey." Many of the great poems of the world deal with travelling, from the wanderings of Ulysses in the Odyssey down to Wordsworth's "Excursion," but the most stupendous journey ever planned and carried out by mortal man is that of the "Divine Comedy." The dual aim which Dante set before him in his early days, he pursued to his life's end, and the fact that, after his studious youth and his political activities in middle life, he became an exile and a wanderer gave him the materials for the endless variety we find as we accompany him in his descent of the Mountain of Purgatory, and through the serene glories of Paradise. Dante was born in 1265, just at the beginning of the Renaissance ; he was the friend of Giotto, and prophesied how the young artist would surpass Cimabue. All the remarkable men of his time were either his friends or his foes, and he makes them live for us as he meets them in the course of his journey. It was the age of growing commerce and travel, in 1294 Marco Polo had returned to Venice, the first successful explorer of the East, while Florence, Dante's native City, looked to the West and her merchant princes became the bankers of Popes and Kings. Dante took his full share in the public life of Florence ; he enrolled himself in one of the Guilds of the People, and was matriculated in the "Arte" of the Apothecaries ; he went on important missions to the cities and courts of Italy and it is believed he reached Paris, and possibly even journeyed as far as Oxford. And so the circumstances of his life were favourable to the development of that marvellous descriptive power that marks all his writings.

There are two special points to be remembered when reading the Comedy:

I., it was the first fruits of the Italian language, and helped to make it the exquisite instrument it is. Up to Dante's time, all serious works had been written in Latin, but as his great work ("to which both Heaven and Earth had set their hands") was designed to make the widest possible popular appeal it was in the vulgar tongue, "questo mio Volgare," that it must be composed. "It is called a Comedy and not a Tragedy," he says, "because it begins sadly and ends joyfully, and next because of its language, that humble speech of ordinary life, in which even women converse." II. The second point to remember is that it was the first great Christian poem, written by a most faithful son of the Church. That Dante attacked and condemned the degeneracy and corruption of the Papal Court has led some to consider him a doubter or even a sceptic, but nothing can be further from the truth. He had studied the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas, the Angelic Doctor, till he had absorbed his whole system and made it his own; the Bible was to him the Book of books, and all his quotations and images from classical writers were balanced by similar passages from the Scriptures, while among the most glorious spirits in Paradise are the Christian Saints. The Church had taught him to see in all wisdom, beauty and excellence the seat of the one Creator. "It is the Church which imparts to the poem, its form and progressive development, her own solemnity, her awe, her calm, her severity and joy. The journey begins under the Easter moon of the year of jubilee, on the morning of Good Friday, the days of her mourning he spends in the region of woe, where none dares to pronounce the name of the Redeemer, and he issues forth to behold again the stars very early in the morning on the day of the Resurrection while the whole arrangement of Purgatory is drawn from church usages. It is a picture of men and women suffering in calm and holy hope the sharp discipline of repentance amid the prayers, the melodies, the consoling images and thoughts, the orderly ritual, the hours of devotion, and the sacraments of the Church militant." (Dean Church's Essay.)

The scenery of the Inferno and the Purgatorio, very variously and distinctly marked, is that of travel. The descent down the sides of the Pit shows one familiar with nature in her most rugged and desolate aspects. When I walked through Pleogstraat Wood, within a few months of the Armistice, Dante's description of the Wood of the Suicides leaped to my mind, "we moved into a wood which by no path was marked. Not green the foliage but of colour dusky; not smooth the branches but gnarled and warped; fruit there was none, but withered twigs with poison." (Inferno XIII.) It was as one familiar with mountain guides that he describes the help Virgil gave him in climbing up and down the crags which divide the ten chasms of the 8th circle. "and as one who works and calculates, always seeming to provide beforehand, so, lifting me up towards the top of one big block, he looked out another, saying, now clamber over that, but try first if it will bear thee! The breath was so exhausted from my lungs when I was up, that I could go no farther, and seated me on arriving." On Virgil's urging him to greater effort, "I then rose, showing myself better furnished with breath than I felt and said, 'Go on, for I am strong and daring'" And then when we come to the ascent of the mountain of Purgatory the scenes are those of sea and hills, valleys and rivers culminating in the wonderful picture of serene beauty in the Earthly Paradise. The traveller visited cities, too. In 1300 (the symbolical (supposed) date of the Comedy) he went to Rome as Prior (envoy) of Florence, and though he does not tell us very much about it he describes how the huge influx of pilgrims in that year were organised in two files for the crossing of the

narrow bridge of Saint Angelo so that "on one side all have their faces towards the Castle and go to St. Peter's, at the other side they go towards the mount."(Inferno XVIII). And when in Paradise XXXI he beholds St. Bernard he recalls the rapt gaze of the pilgrims who murmur to themselves in awe-struck wonder as the "Veronica" is displayed, "My Lord Jesus Christ, true God, and was this then the fashion of Thy semblance?"

What Dante really felt of the augustness of the Eternal City may be read in those wonderful lines spoken by Beatrice when she encourages him to persevere for a little while longer, and then "thou wilt be, with me everlastingly, a citizen of that Rome, where Christ, Himself is a Roman," Purgatory XXXII. Venice on the other hand found no favour with Dante. The Doge treated him with scant politeness when he went there as envoy of Guido da Polenta from Ravenna, and the only picture he gives of her in the poem is an illustration of the lurid and sinister activities of Hell. (Inferno XXI). But the city of which he writes most is of course his own, Florence. "I was born and grew up on Arno's beauteous river in the great city," and through all his denunciations of her perfidy, licentiousness and wickedness, put into mouth of his revered ancestor, Calciaguida, his passionate love for "il mio bel Sao Giovanni," where he a "lamb was baptized," persists. The City in his day was very different to what it is now, Giotto's Campanile was not built, nor Brunelleschi's Dome, and of the many bridges spanning the Arno there is only one, the Ponte alle Grazie, that could have been trodden by him.

As the toils of travel are halved, and its joys doubled, when they are shared with a beloved companion, Dante has at his side all through his mystic journey either Virgil or Beatrice. Virgil, who accompanies him through the first two realms as far as the Earthly Paradise is always "guide, lord and master," the "glory and light of other poets," and even when, in the Earthly Paradise, a lady appeared "olive crowned over a white veil" and his spirit felt "the mighty power of ancient love," he turned to Virgil "Sweetest Father," and found him no longer by his side his cheeks are bedewed with tears. The relationship between Dante and Virgil was unclouded from first to last; not so with Beatrice, though his devotion to her was the seed of his achievement and crown of his life. Interwoven with his purpose of exalting her above all other women was the task of building up the ideal State, under the dual Headship of Pope and Emperor, which should restore to the world what he believed had been planned by the Almighty. If he could accomplish this he would turn "folk living in this mortal life from wretchedness, and bring them to the state of blessedness." In a little book, "From Vita Nuova to Paradise," Dr. P. Wickstead traces out, through all Dantes' Minor Works, how this aim was ever before him, how the Roman Eagle was a sacred sign, second only to the Cross itself. Dante was acutely conscious of how far he had fallen from grace, and he puts his own bitter self reproaches into the mouth of his Lady at this their first meeting. (Purgatory XXX. 103). But when penitence had done its due work, and Dante was "born again, pure and ready to mount to the stars," her sternness was laid aside and "turning to me as much in joy as beauty she said, "Direct thy mind to God in gratitude who hath united us with the first star." (Par. II. 30). Thereafter, though often annoyed by his slowness of comprehension, she is his helpful guide, through the Realms of Bliss, and he is made aware of their ascent from one Heaven to another simply by seeing her "grow more beautiful." (Par. VIII. 13). But the splendour of the Divine Comedy lies not in its details, and no quotations can give any real ideal of it. "Its

greatness is that of a comprehensive and vast conception, sustaining, without weakening or failure, the trial of its long execution and fulfilling at its triumphant close the hope and promise of its beginning."

H. M. HUTTON.

Unitarian and Free Christian.

We know that the above is the short form of a much longer title, which is used in connection with the National Conference, and which includes in the list, "Liberal Christian." In the ordinary way of speaking, it is customary to use the term Unitarian as indicating the lot, just in the same way as the first two or three words of something in the Prayer Book, that has to be chanted, are taken as the title, such as "Te Deum." There is however a tendency in using the term "Unitarian" in that way, to forget that the other titles have their places, and were not specially named without good reason, a reason that becomes more thoroughly understood on a closer acquaintance with our Congregations in England, Scotland and Ireland, especially where there are members and prominent members, who are not Unitarians at all, though they may hold broad views, and who claim an equal right to their membership, with those who are out-and-out Unitarians. An old minister, a very eminent and eloquent preacher, who had very advanced ideas about some things, resolutely declined to be called "Unitarian," and kept to the name "Liberal Christian."

There are those who belong to the National Conference, who are not by any means prepared to side with those, who say they decline to have anything to do with the doctrine of the Trinity in any shape or form, and who have their own way of interpreting the Trinity, which although it may not be orthodox, yet means a very great deal to them. A Church of England manual states that from very early times belief in the Trinity has been a test of orthodoxy. But, it all depends upon how it has been believed, for some teachings concerning the Trinity have been considered as much outside the bounds of orthodoxy as Unitarianism, and that is why National Conference has to have such a long title.

Very often when anyone says he is a Unitarian, the reply is at once, "Oh you don't believe in Christ, do you? "Oh, yes!" is the answer, "we believe in Christ, but we do not believe that he was God, we believe in his Divinity, but not in his Deity, we make a distinction between these two terms." Very seldom is anything said about the Trinity, although a Church of England clergyman travelling in the same compartment with two Unitarian ministers, genially remarked "Unitarians do not understand the Athanasian Creed." It may be a matter of surprise to many, that the Christadelphians are Unitarians. They are in agreement with Judge Rutherford and his disciples that "Millions now living will never die." They maintain there is no justification in the Bible for Heaven and Hell of popular belief. The faithful shall receive immortality and inherit the earth, and the rest will be annihilated in the eternal flames of Gehenna, not kept there for ever in endless torment. Part of their creed is "One God and no devil," which is thoroughly Unitarian. Christ is the Son of God. This and much else, now more or less familiar to the public, make up their tenets. The movement was originated in 1833 as a result of the Bible study of Dr. John Thomas, an Edinburgh medical man.

This much then we have learned, that there are Unitarians who are ultra-orthodox, and Trinitarians who are unorthodox, and neither term taken by itself need mean "tolerance" which is the keynote of religious progress.

ULLIN.

Dr. Snow's English Experiences.

"During the first three days of the week I attended the minister's institute at Willaston School, a Unitarian boarding school of the character of Hackney, turned over to the ministers for part of the Easter holidays. The school lies on the outskirts of Nantwich, an old town with many lovely timbered houses built during Queen Elizabeth's reign, of wood cut from the royal forests after a devastating fire. Here we have a quaint square chapel (built in 1726 ; church founded 1688), with a high pulpit from which for three years Joseph Priestley preached.

"At the Institute were gathered some twenty-five ministers, mostly from the north of England. They welcomed their visitors (for here we four from America were together again) with complete cordiality and we felt from the beginning, at home in the group. The company was small enough to permit general talk, large enough to give variety of viewpoint, and composed of men well enough acquainted to insure freedom of discussion ; these meetings gave us an insight into the problems, the methods and the ideals of our British brother-ministers which we could have had in no other way, and which we appreciated. In the intimacy of living under one roof it was possible to begin friendships which may continue, and do much to promote the understanding for which the exchange of ministers was planned. After Dean Fenn returned from his trip to England last summer he spoke enthusiastically of the qualities, personal and intellectual, of the ministers whom he had met here. We were therefore expecting good things, and at the Institute and elsewhere, we have not been disappointed. Among the reasons for encouragement in the programmes of our common cause, which we will take back to America, will be our knowledge of the personnel of the Unitarian ministry on these islands."

Chronicles of the Churches.

HOLYWOOD.

The Old or First Presbyterian Congregation of Holywood traces its origin to the Rev. Robert Cunningham, the First Presbyterian minister to settle in County Down. After some years he was obliged by the Episcopal party to abandon his charge and returned to Scotland in 1637; he died at Irvine. Apparently there is no authentic record of the history of the congregation earlier than May, 1711, when the Rev. Michael Bruce was ordained. He was a son of the Rev. James Bruce, Killyleagh, grandson of Rev. Michael Bruce, Killinchy, and great grandson of Rev. Robert Bruce, of Edinburgh, a personal friend of King James 1st and was selected by him to crown his Queen—Anne of Denmark. The family of the Bruces has produced seven Ministers in uninterrupted lineal succession ; the last was the late Rev. Wm. Bruce, of the First Congregation, Belfast, who died in October, 1868.

During the Ministry of Michael Bruce the question of subscription was agitating the Synod of Ulster and at length in 1726, a minority constituting themselves the Presybtery of Antrim formed themselves into an independent and Non-Subscribing body. (It is to be hoped that the Presbytery next year, on the occasion of their two hundreth anniversary may arrange a special series of meetings). The majority of the Holywood congregation with their ministers joined the Non-Subscribers. The minority sympathising with the Ulster Synod formed a separate congregation. These two congregations in Holywood were long distinguished by the names "New Light" and "Old Light." Mr. Bruce, who was described as a person of "very uncommon character and worth," died in December, 1735. The Rev. John Beatty was settled as his successor in 1737, and for the long

period of 57 years was minister; he died in June, 1794. His successor, Rev. Arthur M'Mechan, of Kilrea, settled in October, 1794. He unwisely became complicated in the movement which led up to the rebellion in 1798, and found it prudent to leave the country in 1797, but did not resign his pastoral charge. The Presbytery declared the pulpit vacant in June, 1798. Rev. Dr. Crawford, an accomplished scholar and former principal of the Strabane Academy, was the next minister. He died in January, 1800. His successor was the Rev. John C. Wightman, who was ordained in 1801, and continued until his death in 1813. Rev. Samuel Hans Sloan was ordained in April, 1814, and removed to Cork in June, 1820. His successor was the Rev. James Alexander Johnson, who had previously been in Banager, Co. Derry. He took charge of the congregation in June, 1821. In the summer of 1832 Asiatic cholera broke out in Holywood with great virulence. Mr. Johnson was particularly active in his efforts to aid the suffering and check the spread of the disease, and unfortunately after a few hours' illness fell a victim. For two years the congregation was vacant and owing to disagreement over choice of ministers was greatly injured. The Rev. Charles J. M'Alester was ordained in August, 1834 and after a long and successful ministry died in 1891.

The present meeting-house was opened by the late Rev. Dr. Montgomery, September 23rd, 1849. It is the fourth occupied by the congregation; the previous three were on another site.

Following upon the death of the Rev. Charles James M'Alester, there ensued several comparatively short Pastorates, during which successive ministers of varied gifts laboured earnestly to continue the great traditions of fidelity. The Rev. Clement E. Pike was minister from 1892 to 1898 and then left and took up duties at Newport, Isle of Wight. His successor was the Rev. Dr. S. H. Mellone whose scholarship gave him an honourable position in our body generally. When he went to Edinburgh in 1909, the Holywood congregation gave a call to the Rev. G. L. Phelps. His Pastorate was from 1909 to 1921, the latter year being that in which he removed to Pendleton. His successor, in 1921, the Rev. Edgar Lockett, still occupies the historic pulpit and we trust will do so for many more years.

NIGHT.

Farewell, green fields and happy grove,
Where flocks have ta'en delight;
Where lambs have nibbled, silent move
The feet of angels bright;
  Unseen, they pour blessing
  And joy without ceasing,
  On each bud and blossom,
  And each sleeping bosom.

They look in every thoughtless nest,
Where birds are covered warm;
They visit caves of every beast,
To keep them all from harm:
  If they see any weeping
  That should have been sleeping,
  They put sleep on their head,
  And sit down by their bed.

When wolves and tigers howl for prey,
They pitying stand and weep;
Seeking to drive their thirst away,
And keep them from the sheep.
  But if they rush dreadful,
  The angels, most heedful,
  Receive each mild spirit,
  New worlds to inherit.

The Business Agent, the Rev. G J. Slipper, earnestly asks for the early payment of all outstanding accounts for the Magazine. Some of these are now considerably over-due, and it would greatly facilitate the balancing of the accounts if prompt payment were the practice.

Reports.

Ballyclare.—On the kind invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Laird, an enjoyable picnic took place at Ballgallough, on Tuesday, June 16th. Refreshments were served by many willing workers in a very spacious hay shed prepared and neatly arranged for the occasion with seats, tables, etc., and providing floor accommodation for all kinds of indoor games. These were taken up with avidity, both before and after tea and indulged in till almost ten o'clock when adjournment was made to the barn for dancing. The music was provided by Master James Kerr, whose performance on the violin was most creditable, evoking favourable comments on every side. The dancers held the floor till a late hour except for an occasional game at intervals by the younger people present. All were in the best of spirits and thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Shortly after midnight the happy event was brought to a close by the singing of Auld Lang Syne. To our host and hostess in affording us the opportunity for such a pleasurable evening our best thanks are again tendered. On Wednesday, June 24th, the Annual S.S. Excursion took place to Whitehead. The journey was made in chars-a-banc and the morning being bright and sunny the run was most enjoyable. Our wants were amply met at the Brookvale Café, where refreshments were partaken of shortly after arrival and again in the afternoon. The day was spent in various pursuits, games, and forms of enjoyment according to age and inclination. At 9-30 a start was made on the return journey by the customary Larne route and a tired but happy company reached home about eleven o'clock.

* *

Ballyhemlin.—OnOn Sunday, July 12th, the Local Orange Lodge attended divine service, and the church was well-filled. The Rev. John Barron, preached form the text 2 Corinthians 3 : 17. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." The collection, which was on behalf of the Lord Enniskillen Memorial Orphan Fund, amounted to Eight Ppounds.

* *

Comber.—The Annual Floral Services were held on Sunday, 28th June. The Church was beautifully decorated by the teachers. There was a record attendance of scholars. Over one hundred marched in procession to the church, each scholar carrying a bouquet of flowers which was handed to the minister who received them in front of the pulpit. The flowers were distributed among various Belfast hospitals on the following day. The morning service was conducted by the Rev. Glynne Davies, who addressed the children on the message of the Almond Tree, a picture of which forms part of one of the memorial windows recently unveiled in the church. The children sang special hymns and the Anthem entitled "June." In the evening the Rev. A. M. Bell, B.A., of Ballyclare preached a thoughtful sermon on the message of God in Nature. The singing was very hearty and inspiring. Our thanks are due to Mr. W. Munn for conducting and to Mr. W. Keith, of Belfast, for his able services at the organ—to the donors of flowers for the occasion and to those who were responsible for the decorations. The Annual Sunday School Excursion took place to Newcastle, on Saturday, 4th July. We were favoured with beautiful weather and about 170 scholars, parents and friends spent a very enjoyable day at this popular resort.

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Downpatrick.—A children's flower service was held in the First Presbyterian Church, Stream Street, on Sunday, four hymns, taken from the new hymn book of the S.S. Association, were sung by the children, and an appropriate sermon, based on the words of Matt. vi., 28, was preached by Rev. John Begg. These words also "Consider the Lilies," were the subject of a finely rendered solo by Miss

J. Quinn. Three of the senior scholars took up the collection. The scholars' gifts of flowers and eggs were given to the local infirmary. The church was beautifully decorated, and altogether it was felt that this had been a happy and helpful service.

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Larne.—The Service in the Old Meeting House here on June 21st, was unique. Instead of the usual sermon Mr. Kennedy referred in suitable terms to the very sudden death on the previous Sunday evening of Rev. Andrew Boyd, Rector of the Episcopal Church, Larne. The rev. gentleman had just spoken his last words for God's glory and man's good in the pulpit, when the great change came. He was carried into the vestry and in a few minutes all was over. Mr. Kennedy also referred to the death of Mr. John M'Ninch of Seamount, formerly of Ballyboley, who had passed away on the previous day, 20th June. He was in his 86th year, and though somewhat infirm, had enjoyed fairly good health until within a very short time of the end. Mr. M'Ninch was a man of unimpeachable integrity, and high intellectual ability, being very well read in political history. In his personality he combined the strength of true manhood with the affectionate gentleness of woman. Mr. Kennedy spoke of the Episcopal Clergyman and his own Unitarian parishoner, John M'Ninch, his own best friend since he became minister of Larne and Kilwaughter, as heroic men, fully conscious of the inevitable that might fall at any moment, yet cheery, faithful, patient and optimistic till the end. In honour of their memory the "Dead March in Saul" was played on the organ, all reverently standing with bowed heads.

* *

Monster Rally—The Second Annual Rally under the auspices of the Womens League, Unity Guild, and Laymen's League, was held at Larne on June 27th, 1925, a gracious invitation having been received from the members of the Larne Congregation. Addresses were given by Mrs. E. R. Jackson, Women's League; Mr. Kirkham, Unity Guild; and Mr. Leyland, Laymen's League, each dealing with the efforts, past and future, of their respective organisations, and it is felt that definite and tangible results will accrue. The Moderator (Rev. W. H. Townley Tilson, M.A.), voiced the feelings of those present in his kindly reference to the absence of the Rev. James Kennedy, Larne, owing to sickness.

* *

Mountpottinger.—The Members of the Choir accompanied by a few friends held their annual excursion on Saturday, June 13th, when Groomsport was the selected destination. It was pleasantly fine without being unduly hot and in consequence the good stretch of sand at the delightful seaside resort proved popular for games of various kinds which were indulged in prior to, and following, the serving of tea which was much appreciated at the Arcadia Café. The inevitable cameras were with the party and several interesting groups were photographed during the afternoon which will form a permanent record of a very pleasant day. The arrangements, which met with entire approval, were admirably made by Mr. L. Watters, the Secretary of the Music Committee. During the month of July the Minister has been holdiay making in North Wales and the pulpit has been supplied by Messrs. Arnold Williams and J. H. Gilliland.

MARRIAGES.

GORDON—WILSON—June 30, Thomas Harold Gordon to Mary Ann Wilson; both of Belfast.

HAYES—FOX—July 8, John Hayes to Doris Fox. Both of Belfast.

PATTERSON—MAJOR—July 11, Adam Patterson to Vera Dorothy Major. Both of Holywood, Co. Down.

BAPTISM.

On Thursday, July 2nd, at the Manse, Downpatrick, by the Rev. J. H. Bibby, Muriel Eunice, daughter of Rev. and Mrs. J. Begg.

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ST. PATRICK'S HYMN BEFORE TARA.
(From the Irish)

Christ, as a light,
Illumine and guide me!
Christ as a shield, o'ershadow and cover me!
Christ be under me! Christ be over me!
Christ be beside me
On left hand and right!
Christ be before me, behind me, about me!
Christ this day be within and without me!

Christ, the lowly and meek,
Christ, the All-powerful, be
In the heart of each to whom I speak,
In the mouth of each who speaks to me!
In all who draw near me,
Or see me or hear me!

At Tara to-day, in this awful hour,
I call on the Holy Trinity!
Glory to Him, who reigneth in power,
The God of the Elements, Father and Son,
And Paraclete Spirit, which Three are the One,
The ever-lasting Divinity.

Salvation dwells with the Lord,
With Christ, the Omnipotent Word.
From generation to generation
Grant us, O, Lord, Thy grace salvation.

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